



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on CIS Summit Declaration on the OSCE

As delivered by Acting Deputy Representative James Cox
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 8, 2004

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

We appreciate the information provided to us by the distinguished Russian ambassador on behalf of the CIS. However, let me make it perfectly clear – the United States respectfully disagrees with the characterizations of OSCE work contained in that document.

Over the past few years, CIS states themselves have contributed to the expansion of OSCE work in the pol-mil dimension. The vast majority of OSCE states has made it clear that greater attention to this important component of OSCE's contribution to Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security does not and must not detract from the unique and vital role that the OSCE, through its field missions and ODIHR, play in promoting democratization and respect for human rights.

As heads of state and government concluded at the Istanbul Summit in 1999, and as we all agreed last year in the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century, negotiations on which CIS states took an active part, and I quote: "Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law is at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security."

Furthermore, in those documents participating States declared, and again I quote: "Field operations and the Secretariat are important instruments in assisting all participating States to implement their commitments, including respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law." The United States stands firmly and squarely behind these statements made by the highest political levels of our governments.

It is thus unfortunate that some OSCE states have expressed contrary views about the OSCE, its institutions and its field missions at a time when the field missions may be asked to undertake certain pol-mil dimension projects, including channeling voluntary assistance to states to assist them with the destruction of excess stockpiles of ammunition and small arms and light weapons (SA/LW).

The United States believes that erosion of the activities of the missions in key areas of democratization and promoting human rights also could have negative consequences for the missions' ability to also carry out work on these important pol-mil questions.

We believe that the review now underway of OSCE field operations and of the work of the organization as a whole in working groups chaired by the Canadian and Romanian ambassadors, respectively, should be the vehicles for debate as to if, and how, the OSCE might be further

strengthened so as to maintain its comparative advantages in promoting stability and security within and among participating States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.